

CONGRESSWOMAN

Carolyn McCarthy

District Office Accomplishments - 107th Congress

Congresswoman Carolyn McCarthy's District Office serves as the hub of Congressional activities in the 4th Congressional District. Events, school appearances, award presentations, press conferences, casework meetings, advisory councils—all of these venues afford Congresswoman McCarthy an in-depth way to keep in constant contact with her constituents.

FACTS ABOUT THE DISTRICT OFFICE

- √ Recognizing the need for good constituent services, Congresswoman McCarthy has long stressed the importance of courteous and thorough casework from her district office. Her district office staff, with her since 1997, have easy access to Carolyn for her information and input into cases.

DISTRICT CASEWORK FACT—The office has logged more than **10,000** individual cases and hundreds more for information and referral.

- √ Immigration continues to be the highest number of cases with two staff people dedicated to this area. The Congresswoman is approached everywhere with people thanking her for coming to their aid. Immigrants who are here legally find themselves caught in the Immigration and Naturalization Service's red tape. In today's climate they hesitate to reach out for assistance. The most frequent cases involve adjustment of status, citizenship, immigrant and visitor visas, status verification, employment authorization and international adoptions.
- √ The reputation of her office in this area has grown by word of mouth and into agencies, such as Family Services, Catholic Charities, Hispanic Counseling Center and Carecen, all of whom seek out help and advice for a population that is severely overlooked. This is an under served population who cannot vote—yet get the same attention and care as any voter in the district.

- √ Congresswoman McCarthy was particularly touched last fall at the Garden City Community Church when a woman said, “Thank you,” for helping in the adoption of her twin grandchildren from China. Again, the district office helped this woman cut through red tape, trace lost files, and deal with the different agencies involved. Most likely, the children would have stayed in the orphanage if not for the intercession of her district office.
- √ Congresswoman McCarthy’s District Office responds to all questions in a friendly and competent and quick manner, ranging from: passport assistance, travel advisories, flags flown over the Capitol, a user-friendly web-site with a special children’s page, tour requests and general information on planning a trip to the nation’s capital, status information on bills, and consumer advice on current issues.

DISTRICT CASEWORK FACT—Congresswoman McCarthy’s District Office knows how to maneuver the maze that is the Social Security Administration, and is often able to expedite constituents’ claims for Social Security Disability and SSI. When a person becomes disabled and they file for disability benefits, Social Security can legally take six months to make a decision. If the claim is denied and they file for a reconsideration, it can take another six months before a final decision is made. In the interim, with no income, a family is forced to use savings or borrow money in order to live. In addition, many cases are held up because papers are lost or not filed. The District Office can find out where the hold-up is, and try to remedy the situation. While the office holds no influence over the decision, often, the process is expedited. The office has logged more than **10,000** individual cases and hundreds more for information and referral.

- √ The office maintains a non-partisan relationship with other elected offices at all levels of government and helps anyone within the C.D. when asked.
- √ Internships are available for credit and non-credit. Several of the original 1997 interns return each summer.

DISTRICT WORK: EDUCATION

- √ On Mondays, Congresswoman McCarthy visits schools in her district to stay in touch with Long Island’s future generations. She recognizes schools that demonstrate a unique contribution to Long Island education each month through her School of the Month program. Congresswoman McCarthy honors Schools of the Month with a speech on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives, as well as bestowing a Congressional Proclamation of Distinction award.
- √ For her legislation and work to put a school nurse in every school—(*for more information see the Health Care Fact Sheet*)—the New York State School Nursing Association has chosen to honor Congresswoman McCarthy.

- √ Due to the large amount of lives lost in that community, Congresswoman McCarthy has been in the Rockville Centre School District as much as possible as that community works through the devastation left after September 11.

CONGRESSIONAL ARTS COMPETITION—For six years, Congresswoman McCarthy has hosted the Congressional Arts Competition—Artistic Discovery. The competition is a way for all 4th Congressional District public and private high school students can display their artistic talent *and* pay for college. The winning artwork hangs in the Capitol for one year. If the 1st, 2nd and 3rd place winners attend Adelphi as art majors, they receive scholarships in the amounts of \$7,000, \$5,000, and \$3,000, respectively.

- √ In addition, Congresswoman has continued to monitor the Roosevelt School District's problems-meeting with the Superintendent and the residents and having an ongoing dialogue with Commissioner Mills. She has been in the schools and knows the problems.

DISTRICT WORK: VETERANS

- √ Congresswoman McCarthy, realizing the importance of helping Long Island's aging Veterans population, has dedicated one staff member in the district office to deal with the problems veterans from all wars and conflicts are now experiencing. She has a Veterans Advisory Committee and has held Veterans' Conferences to help her understand the issues. In addition, her district office works to help speed the veterans' claim backlog and adjudication of each claim, and update her constituents about the ongoing work to locate missing U.S. personnel.

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- √ Hundreds of veterans have sought her help to replace missing medals, increase a service-connected injury payment, apply for an original claim, assist in choosing a nursing home, and seek benefits for spouses and children.
- √ Congresswoman McCarthy has been to the VA Hospital in Northport and was there recently to honor women veterans. She continues an ongoing dialogue with the Administration of the hospital as well as the staff and the patients.

DISTRICT CASEWORK FACT—At the request of veterans and constituents, Congresswoman McCarthy introduced **H.R. 3796 Improving Access to Veterans Health Care Act**, which would require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to place priority 7 veterans who are determined to be eligible for low-income assistance, in category 5. Category placement is important because the Veterans Administration only reimburses the Veterans Integrated Services Networks (VISN) for the care that the VISN provides to veterans in categories 1 through 6. The fact that VISN 3 leads the nation in both inpatient and outpatient category 7 veterans has worsened the funding shortfall it has experienced over the past several years.

DISTRICT WORK: ISRAEL

- √ Congresswoman McCarthy has a Foreign Policy Advisory Committee to hear concerns from the community as it relates to Israel. As a result of the last meeting, Congresswoman McCarthy hand-delivered a letter to Secretary of State Colin Powell asking for an explanation of certain policies regarding funding to the Palestine Authority.

DISTRICT CASEWORK FACT—Most recently, she was the only public official asked to speak at a Five Towns Jewish Council rally in support of Israel attended by 3,000 people on Sunday, April 14, 2002. Congresswoman McCarthy told the crowd, “Israel has been a good friend for many years. It is up to all of us to band together, to fight together so we can live in peace.”

- √ Congresswoman McCarthy has also consistently met with students from Stella K. Abraham High School for Girls regarding the Israeli MIA’s. She has two staff people active in the Jewish community to keep her informed about concerns, and to do pro-active outreach to this constituency.

DISTRICT WORK: SENIORS

- √ In responses to constituents’ requests for help fighting rising prescription drug costs, Congresswoman McCarthy commissioned the House Committee on Government Reform to conduct the first study on Long Island to investigate the high cost of prescription drugs for senior citizens.
- √ In response to hundreds of calls from senior citizens, Congresswoman McCarthy convened a Medicare+Choice workshop to help her constituents understand the system. Soon she will host another forum to update the public on the status of the Medicare HMOs that are leaving Nassau County, or increasing premiums and offering fewer services.

DISTRICT WORK: HEALTH CARE

- √ A nurse for 30 years in her district, Congresswoman McCarthy takes health care issues very seriously. Congresswoman McCarthy is the Nassau County Chairperson for the 2001-2002 New York Blood Center campaign. She has been an active participant in this campaign, encouraging schools to increase their blood drives, as well as successfully arranging a bi-partisan recruitment of blood donors at polling sites on election day. In Washington, her advocacy for this issue propelled her to the Democratic Chairwoman of the U.S. House of Representatives blood drive.

DISTRICT CASEWORK FACT—Congresswoman McCarthy and Congressman Peter King teamed up to pass a resolution Establishing a Summer Emergency Blood Month in 2001 to encourage blood donation on Long Island and throughout the State of New York. She named blood donor and advocate Bill Emmel of Floral Park her “Citizen of the Month,” recognizing him for an incredible 159 donations as of July 2001.

- √ On a casework level, Congresswoman McCarthy’s district staff continues to press for expeditious, fair and comprehensive care for those who have been denied the same. She has been involved in advocating for organ donations, and was responsible for expediting a liver transplant to a man whose condition couldn’t sustain a three year wait. By cutting through the insurance company red tape, a decision of denial was overturned by an insurance company for care for a severely handicapped child.

DISTRICT WORK: ENVIRONMENT

- √ In November of 2001, a parent called the Nassau County Department of Health regarding the air quality at the Tutor Time Center in Mineola, which was located adjacent to Jackson Steel, a Superfund site.
- √ As soon as she was made aware of this problem, Congresswoman McCarthy began what has developed into a near-daily dialogue with officials of EPA and the Nassau County Department of Health, first to understand the problem, and second, to determine what was being done to eliminate it.
- √ In addition to demanding results to air and groundwater testing, Congresswoman McCarthy was instrumental in the removal of drums located on the Jackson Steel property that contained volatile organic compounds. According to the EPA’s own documents these barrels were dangerous and very likely explosive.
- √ Congresswoman McCarthy continues to respond and answer her constituents’ requests for help. She monitors this situation on a daily basis to make sure that the health and safety of all children is the number one consideration.

DISTRICT WORK: TAX RELIEF

- ✓ Congresswoman McCarthy, recognizing that red tape sometimes goes hand in hand with the Internal Revenue Service, has a caseworker on the district staff to help taxpayers with their problems, ranging from refund check corrections to questions about last year's tax code changes, and the Taxpayer Advocate Office to get answers and results.

DISTRICT WORK: DEFENSE

- ✓ On Tuesday, March 26, 2002, Congresswoman Carolyn McCarthy visited the USS Theodore Roosevelt. The aircraft carrier was en route home after being deployed in the Middle East for the past seven and one half months.
- ✓ The centerpiece of the event was a ceremony including the ship's crew, the Congressional delegation, as well as members of the New York City Fire Department and the New York City Police Department. A flag, flown over the World Trade Center on September 11, and loaned to the carrier for its tour, was given back to New York City.

DISTRICT WORK: REDUCING AIRPLANE NOISE ON LONG ISLAND

Long Islanders are forced to live with—but have never accepted—the number of planes that fly over their homes, businesses and schools. As a lifelong resident of Mineola, Congresswoman McCarthy understands this concern. The noise emitted from commercial airplanes can be deafening. That is why I supported several legislative remedies addressing this problem.

Aircraft Monitoring System, Congresswoman McCarthy is working to secure \$240,000 in federal funding for an innovative web-based system that could allow the public to monitor aircraft take-offs and landings at LaGuardia, JFK and other Port Authority Airports, and report specific breaches in airport regulations.

PASSUR is a flight monitoring system that uses an independent radar network to provide information on aircraft. For security reasons, the system is delayed ten minutes for a “near-live” picture of aircraft traffic that allows aircraft type and altitude to be identified. Within an hour, full flight information is available including airline, flight number, aircraft type, altitude, and origin and destination. The flight monitoring system has been cleared for public use by the FAA.

This makes the airline and the airport directly accountable to the public, because the data can be used by individuals to determine an aircraft's compliance with rules and regulations. Complaints can be taken directly to the airline, the Port Authority, or the Federal Aviation Administration. Airline noise could be lessened if violators of spacial rules were violated.

Also, Congresswoman McCarthy believes aircraft monitoring is one more way of securing our homeland. The tracking system could help authorities make New York skies safer.